DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 166 115 SO 011 505

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TITLE Women in American History Unit.
PUB DATE [77]
NOTE 19p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Course Content; *Course Objectives; Curriculum Development; Curriculum Guides; *Females; Feminism; Junior High School Students; Secondary Education; *Social Studies; Social Studies Units; *United States History; Womens Studies

ABSTRACT

This teaching unit was developed to highlight the role of women in American history. Written for the junior and senior high school level, the unit examines how women's role has changed, what contributions were made by women in the almost 400 years of our history, effects of the women's rights and suffragist movement of the 19th century, and changes accomplished by the current women's movement. Objectives include development of the ability to compare American ideas of masculinity and femininity with those of other cultures, discuss Freud's opinions about women, explain how scientists and anthropologists have analyzed the conditioning of American women, and discuss contributions of specific women during specific periods of history. The unit contains pre- and posttests, a list of 25 objectives, suggestions of content material for each of 15 days, background issues with related study questions, and a bibliography of 25 resources. (AV)

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UNIT

WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY

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SØ-011505

INTRODUCTION

American history has traditionally been interpreted, written, and taught as white male history. Women and blacks have been treated as mere adjuncts to white men, or their importance has been completely ignored. Sometimes men have been given credit for contributions that were actually made by women, as is the case when Eli Whitney is cited as the inventor of the cotton gin.

This unit was written to rectify the omission of women in high school American history courses. Students will learn how women's role has changed, and changed again, what contributions were made by women in the almost 400 years of our history, the effects of the women's rights and suffragist movement of the 19th century, and the changes accomplished and promised by the current women's movement.

The unit was designed to be used with students of varying abilities. Bright students can read the primary source material, such as Feminism: The Essential Historial Writings and Women Together. Slower students can read the secondary source material such as A Single Standard and Remarkable American Women: 1776-1976 and the booklets from Xerox; the reading level of these selections is at the junior high level. There are enough suggested books for the teacher to find something suitable for every member of the class. The extensive bibliography contains numerous sources of information for each day's presentation.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

Evaluate the economic, social, and psychological effects of sex roles and sexism on man as well as on women.

Differentiate between matriarchal and patriarchal organization of society.

Compare American ideas of masculinity and femininity with those of other cultures.

Compare 20th-century American ideas of masculinity and femininity with those of earlier America.

Describe how each of the following groups viewed women: Eastern philosophers, Greek philosophers, Biblical writers, medieval

philosophers, Enlightenment philosophers.

Discuss Freud's opinions about women, including his theories of penis envy and "anatomy is destiny."

Compare how women are treated in literature of different periods and different countries.

Contrast the roles of women in past and present Native American cultures.

Explain how scientists, such as Margaret Mead, Havelock Ellis, Masters & Johnson, and Gunnar Myrdal, have analyzed the conditioning of American Women.

Explain how the abolitionist movement stimulated the 19th century women's rights movement.

Identify the Seneca Falls convention and evaluate its importance.

Identify important women in the 19th-century women's movement such as, but not limited to: Lucretia Mott, Angelina and Sarah Grimke, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, Sojourner Truth.

Cite the contribution made to American history by each of the following: Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, Sybil Ludington, Harriet Tubman, Margaret Fuller, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Anna Ella Carroll, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Clara Barton, Victoria Woodhull, Dorothea Dix, Sacajawea, Belva Lockwood, Elizabeth Blackwell, Jane Addams.

Discuss the contributions of the women whose work led directly to the Nineteenth Amendment: Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, Alice Paul.

Analyze the role of women in the American economy prior to the Industrial Revolution and compare it to the role of women in the early 20th century and to the present.

Describe the changes in the education of women that were accomplished through the efforts of people like Mary Lyon and Emma Willard.

Compare the tactics of the Pankhurst Movement in England to those of the suffragist movement in the United States.

Give examples of the loosening of social restrictions involving women during the 1920's.

Describe the contribution of Margaret Sanger in giving women control of their own bodies.

Describe the contributions of American women during the World Wars.

Discuss the role of women during the 1950's and 1960's.

Analyze the causes of the re-emergence of the women's movement during the 1960's, including the work of Betty Friedan.

Identify women whose influence is being felt in today's society.

Compare the subjects of early American women authors and poets with those of today's women.

List the arguments for and against the Equal Rights Amendment; decide which side to support and defend that decision with logic and reasoning.

Outline the goals of the current women's movement.

PRETEST

Multiple-choice

_____1. Sexism is (a) a biological division into male and female, (b) an obscene book, movie, etc., (c) prejudice or discrimination against someone because of his/her sex, (d) none of the above.

_____2. The Seneca Falls Convention (a) was organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, (b) approved a "Declaration of Sentiments" outlining the ways women were oppressed. (c) was the first women's rights convention in the U.S., (d) all of the above.

_____3. The Nineteenth Amendment (a) freed the slaves, (b) provided for an income tax, (c) gave women the right to vote, (d) gave 18-year-olds the right to vote.

_____4. The Comstock laws (a) made it illegal to send birth control information through the mail, (b) made it illegal for women to work more than 8 hours a day, (c) gave women the right to control their own earnings, (d) none of the above.

_____5. The EEOC (a) is a national women's organization, (b) is a government agency which investigates charges of discrimination in employment, (c) campaigns against the consumption of alcohol (d) is a method of birth control.

Matching:

___1. Susan B. Anthony
___2. Carrie Chapman Catt
___3. Elizabeth Blackwell
___4. Margaret Sanger
___5. Jane Addams
___6. Rosie the Riveter
___7. Abigail Adams
___8. Alice Paul
___9. Betty Friedan
___10. Harry Burns

A. Feminist who worked in the western states to win women's right to vote; later she led the campaign which finally resulted in the constitutional amendment to guarantee women's suffrage.
B. Established Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago.
C. Warned her husband John that "the ladies" might revolt if they weren't dealt with fairly in the new U.S. government.
D. Wrote The Feminine Mystique which helped start the current women's movement; one of the founders of NOW.
E. Tennessee legislator whose vote was decisive in ratifying the Nineteenth Amendment.
F. Feminist who devoted her life to women's suffrage; established The Revolution newspaper; the Nineteenth Amendment has been given her name.
G. First woman to graduate from a U.S. medical school.
H. Term for all women who worked in war equipment plants during World War II.
I. In 1913 she launched a spectacular campaign to secure a suffrage amendment from Congress, with demonstrations, parades and picketing.
J. Started the U.S. birth control movement; was arrested for telling women how to keep from getting pregnant.

True-False:

___1. "Penis envy" is a concept developed by Sigmund Freud in which he explained why women feel incomplete and frustrated.
___2. Sexist textbooks show boys as "doers" and girls as "watchers."
___3. According to English common law (the basis of American law) a married woman has no legal existence; she is part of her husband.
___4. The women's movement has always been a unified force, with all people who participated supporting the same goals.
___5. "Women" were added as a joke to those groups covered by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
___6. The acceptable "woman's role" in the 1950's and 1960's was to have a fulfilling career.
___7. "Protective legislation" somestimes keeps women from promotions and higher wages.
___8. "Consciousness-raising" is a technique used to help women realize how lucky they are to be protected.
___9. A "double standard" makes some behaviors acceptable if done by men, unacceptable if done by women.
__10. A patriarchal family is one in which all authority rests with the father.

SUGGESTED DAILY CONTENT MATERIAL

Day 1 -- Introduction of Unit and Pretest
Pass out objectives
Discuss meaning of some basic terms: sexism, sexual stereotyping, patriarchal, matriarchal

Day 2 -- Early views of womanhood -- Greeks, Jewish(Biblical), Freud, Stone, Ibsen, Medieval theologians, Eastern philosophers

Possible Methods: Mimeographed selections from above sources and class discussion or panel discussion

Day 3 -- Women in pre-Colonial America in Native American Cultures
Women in Colonial America to Civil War (Abigail Adams, Mary Wollstonecraft, Grimke sisters, Elizabeth Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Sojourner Truth)
The Seneca Falls Convention
Enlightenment philosophers (John Stuart Mill)

Method: Role playing

Day 4 -- Influence of the abolitionist movement on early feminists
Campaign to reform laws dealing with women and women's suffrage (Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, Frances Willard, Alice Paul)
Influence of the Pankhurst Movement on American suffragists

Day 5 -- Role of women in the American economy before the Industrial Revolution
Working conditions of women in the 19th Century
Broadening of educational opportunities for women (Emma Willard, Oberlin College, Mt. Holyoke, Elizabeth Blackwell, Belva Lockwood)

Day 6 -- Place of women in society
Settlement work -- Jane Addams
Birth control -- Margaret Sanger
Sexuality -- Havelock Ellis

Methods: Class discussion and movies such as "We, the Women," narrated by Mary Tyler Moore

Day 7 -- Expanding Freedom of Women in the 1920's
Contributions of women during the World Wars

Day 8 -- What was being discovered about women in the U.S. in the 50's and 60's: Betty Friedan, Margaret Mead, Gunnar Myrdal, Masters and Johnson

Day 9 -- Women in the 70's
NOW and other women's organizations
Pay differentials
Women in the professions
ERA
Abortion controversy
Religion
Child Care
Advertising and the media

Day 10 -- Sexism in schools
Stereotyped masculine and feminine roles in textbooks
Sexism in civil rights (alimony work)
Consciousness Raising
Educational opportunities

Day 11 -- Debates on ERA

Day 12 -- Women who have arrived
Arts
Law
Medicine
Engineering
Education
Business

Source: Remarkable American Women 1776-1976 Life Special Report

Method: Individual Reports

Day 13 -- The treatment of women in American literature
Women's concerns as expressed in poetry and fiction written by women

Day 14 -- Culminating activity
Group skits or plays on any phase of women in American History or publication of newspaper with student investigations cf the subject

Day 15 -- Post Test

BACKGROUND ISSUES

Terms to identify: sexism, patriarchal, matriarchal, "double standard"

Questions to consider:

1. How are sex-role stereotypes transmitted to children?
2. How do societies differ on what they consider masculine and feminine?
3. What are Margaret Mead's findings in relation to how cultures designate some traits and behaviors as masculine, some as feminine?
4. What did Plato think about men and emotion? What was the Greek opinion of women?
5. In the Eastern religions and philosophies, what is the role of women?
6. What is the role of women according to traditional interpretations of the Bible?
7. How did medieval philosophers such as St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine view women?
8. What was the place of women in English common law?
9. What feelings and ideas about woman's place did John Stuart Mill express in The Subjection of Women?
10. What ideas did Mary Wollstonecraft express in Vindication of the Rights of Women?
11. How did Sigmund Freud feel about women? Identify: penis envy. What did Freud see as the source of women's problems? How did he think women could be fulfilled? Identify: "anatomy is destiny."
12. What ideas did Henrik Ibsen express in A Doll's House?
13. What did Gunnar Myrdal point out in An American Dilema?
14. What have Masters and Johnson discovered about women's sexuality?
15. What does Abraham Maslow say about the side-effects of stereotyped femininity?

18th AND 19th CENTURY WOMEN OF IMPORTANCE

People to identify:

Abigail Adams	Anna Ella Carroll
Mercy Otis Warren	Harriet Beecher Stowe
Sybil Ludington	Clara Barton
Harriet Tubman	Victoria Woodhull
Margaret Fuller	Sacajawea
Charlotte Perkins Gilman	Dorothea Dix

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE AMERICAN FEMINIST MOVEMENT

People to identify:

Frances Wright	Susan B. Anthony
Sarah & Angelina Grimke	Sojourner Truth
Elizabeth Cady Stanton	Amelia Bloomer
Lucretia Mott	Ernestine Rose

Questions to consider:

1. In view of the contribution of colonial women, why were they still not considered equal to men? About what did Abigail Adams warn her husband John?

(Questions cont.)

2. How is abolition related to the women's struggle for equality? What did some abolitionists not want the women to speak of their own oppression? Why did the issue of women's rights become less important to many people by the middle of the 19th century?
3. Identify: Seneca Falls Convention. Who organized it? Identify: Declaration of Principles. For what reforms did the women petition the New York State Legislature?
4. Why did many women return to working for abolitionist causes during the Civil War? Why were feminists upset by the Fourteenth Amendment?

THE SUFFRAGISTS

People to identify:
- Carrie Chapman Catt
- Frances Willard
- Alice Stone Blackwell
- Harriet Blatch
- Lucy Burns
- Alice Paul
- Harry Burns

Questions to consider:
1. Why did the women's movement split after the Civil War? Differentiate between the National Woman Suffrage Organization and the American Woman Suffrage Association.
2. What is the significance of 1869 in Wyoming?
3. Identify the Pankhurst Movement and tell how it influenced American suffragists.
4. How did the suffrage movement change after 1912? What activity began on January 10, 1917?
5. Identify: Anthony Amendment. When did Congress vote on it? What were the results? When was the suffrage amendment ratified?

CHANGES IN WOMEN'S POSITION IN SOCIETY, 1800-1900

People to identify:
- Emma Willard
- Mary Lyon
- Elizabeth Blackwell
- Belva Lockwood

Questions to consider:
1. Why did women begin to work in factories in the early 19th century? What effect did the Irish immigration of the 1840's have on women's wages?
2. What sort of education did women receive in the early 19th century? Why did a movement to educate women begin?
3. Which was the first college to admit women? Why was its course for women a limited one?
4. What sort of work were women doing after the Civil War? Why were many working women not willing to fight for better working conditions for themselves? Why did employers discriminate against women? By the end of the 19th century, what was the position of women workers?
5. Identify: The Revolution.

REFORMS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

People to identify:
- Jane Addams
- Lillian Wald
- Margaret Sanger
- Dr. John Rock
- Helen Gahagan Douglas
- Havelock Ellis
- Rose Schneiderman
- Bessie Hillman
- Eleanor Roosevelt
- Rosa Parks
- "Mother Jones"

Terms to identify:
- Comstock Laws
- "Family Limitation"
- Woman Rebel
- Rosie the Riveter
- "Overeducated housewife"

Questions to consider:

1. How was Muller vs. Oregon both a defeat and a victory for women? How does protective legislation sometimes hurt women? How could protective legislation be made more fair?
2. Identify: Hull House. What was the aim of the settlement movement? What kinds of new legislation were inspired by the work at Hull House?
3. Why weren't women given birth control information? What influence did Sadie Sachs have on Margaret Sanger? Why was Margaret Sanger indicted? What did Sanger decide to do when she was to go on trial?
4. Describe Sanger's trip to Europe, the people with whom she studied, and the knowledge with which she returned to the U.S.
5. What often happened to people who gave out birth control infomation? What work of Robert Owen's aided women? What happened when Sanger's case came to trial?
6. How did women's freedom expand during the 1920's?
7. How did women's economic position suffer during the Depression?
8. What sort of work did women do, inside and out of the military, during World War II?
9. Why did the birth rate increase after World War II? What was "woman's role" during the 1950's and 1960's?

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

People to identify:
- Betty Friedan
- Florynce Kennedy
- Barbara Jordan
- Elizabeth Chisholm
- Bella Abzug
- Ella Grasso
- Gloria Steinem
- Phyllis Schafley

Terms to identify:
- "Kinder, Kirche, Kuche"
- "consciousness-raising"
- "sexist" textbooks
- Equal Rights Amendment

Questions to consider:

1. According to Friedan, what is the problem of the "feminine mystique?"
2. Why was the word "sex" added to the Civil Rights Act of 1964? Identify: EEOC.
3. Why was NOW organized? What did NOW committeds find out about women's position in the U.S. in the 1960's?
4. How does the "double standard" hurt men? What might be some effects of men's liberation?
5. What goals do feminists have in the following areas: child care, religion, advertising, the media, abortion, employment, education?

FINAL TEST

Matching, 2 points each:

___1. Susan B. Anthony
___2. Abigail Adams
___3. Mary Wollstonecraft
___4. Sarah & Angelina Grimke
___5. Carrie Chapman Catt
___6. Alice Stone Blackwell
___7. Lucy Burns &Alice Paul
___8. Harry Burns
___9. Elizabeth Blackwell
___10. Belva Lockwood
___11. Jane Addams
___12. Margaret Sanger
___13. John Rock
___14. Helen Gahagan Douglas
___15. Betty Friedan
___16. Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Lucretia Mott
___17. Sojourner Truth

A. First woman to graduate from a U.S. medical school.
B. Developed the birth control pill.
C. Tennessee legislator whose vote was decisive in ratifying the 19th Amendment
D. Organized the Seneca Falls Convention.
E. Feminist who devoted her life to women's suffrage; established The Revolution newspaper; the 19th Amendment has been given her name.
F. First woman allowed to argue case before the U.S. Supreme Court
G. Abolitionists from South Carolina who became feminists.
H. Wrote The Feminine Mystique which helped start the current women's movement; one of the founders of NOW.
I. Established Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago.
J. Warned her husband John that "the ladies" might revolt if they weren't dealt with fairly in the new U.S. government.
K. Englishwoman who, in 1792, argued that women are equal to men and should have the same rights, privileges, and opportunities.
L. Feminist who worked in the western states to win women's right to vote; later she led the campaign which finally resulted in the constitutional amendment to guarantee women's suffrage.
M. In 1913 they launched a spectacular campaign to secure a suffrage amendment from Congress, with demostrations, parades, and picketing.
N. Reconciled the quarreling factions of the suffrage movement, joined the AWSA and the NWSO in to one organization.
O. Former slave who spoke eloquently for women's rights by telling how no one protected her "and ain't I a woman?"
P. Congresswoman who tried in the 1940's to get an equal pay act passed.
Q. Started the birth control movement in the U.S.; was arrested for telling women how to keep from getting pregnant.

Matching (cont.)

___1. A Doll's House
___2. An American Dilemma
___3. Vindication of the Right of Women
___4. Declaration of Principles, Seneca Falls
___5. "Family Limitation"
___6. Equal Rights Amendament
___7. 19th Amendment
___8. Woman Rebel

A. Mary Wollstonecraft's book; argues for the equality of men and women.
B. Equality of the rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.
C. Margaret Sanger's newspaper; it was declared obscene and she was indicted for continuing to publish it.
D. Henrik Ibsen's play; Nora finds in it that she cannot live any longer treated as a child by (first) her father and (then) her husband.
E. The pamphlet Margaret Sanger wrote which described methods and devices of birth control.
F. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any other State on account of sex.
G. In this book, Gunnar Myrdal pointed out the parallels between the traits Americans assigned to blacks and those thought common to women.
H. Document written in 1848 which catalogued a large list of ways women were oppressed.

True-False, 1 point each:

____1. "Penis envy" is a concept developed by Sigmund Freud in which he explained why women feel incomplete and frustrated.
____2. Sexist textbooks show boys as "doers" and girls as "watchers."
____3. According to English common law (the basis of American law) a married woman has no legal existence; she is part of her husband.
____4. The women's movement has always been a unified force, with all people who participated supporting the same goals.
____5. "Women" were added as a joke to those groups covered by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
____6. The acceptable "woman's role" in the 1950's and 1960's was to have a fulfilling career.
____-7. "Protective legislation" sometimes keeps women from promotions and higher wages.
____8. "Consciousness-raising" is a technique used to help women realize how lucky they are to be protected.
____9. A "double standard" makes some behaviors acceptable if done by men, unacceptable if done by women.
___10. A patriarchal family is one in which all authority rests with the father.

Multiple-choice, 2 points each:

____1. Sexism is (a) a biological division into male and female, (b) an obscene book, movie, etc., (c) prejudice or discrimination against someone because of his/her sex, (d) none of the above.

____2. The Seneca Falls convention (a) was organized by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, (b) approved a "Declaration of Sentiments" outlining the ways women were oppressed, (c) was the first women's rights convention in the U.S., (d) all of the above.

____3. The Nineteenth Amendment (a) freed the slaves, (b) provided for an income tax, (c) gave women the right to vote, (d) gave 18-year-olds the right to vote.

____4. The Comstock laws (a) made it illegal to send birth control information through the mail, (b) made it illegal for women to work more than 8 hours a day, (c) gave women the right to control their own earnings, (d) none of the above.

____5. The EEOC (a) is a national women's organization, (b) is a government agency which investigates charges of discrimination in employment, (c) campaigns against the consumption of alcohol, (d) is a method of birth control.

____6. The woman whose refusal to move to the back of the bus sparked the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's was (a) Phyllis Schafley, (b) Rosa Parks, (c) Caroline Bird, (d) Ella Grasso.

____7. In Wyoming, 1869, (a) the Seneca Falls Convention was held, (b) the last state voted to ratify the 19th Amendment, (c) the legislature voted to give the state's women the right to vote, (d) The Revolution newspaper was started.

____8. The English women's struggle to win suffrage was (a) the Enlightenment, (b) the Feminine Mystique, (c) the Declaration of Sentiments, (d) the Pankhurst Movement.

____9. The term applied to all women workers in war plants during World War II was (a) Rosie the Riveter (b) Wanda the Welder, (c) WACS, (d) Peace Corps.

___10. The early feminist movement was related to the abolitionist movement in which of the following ways? (a) many of the same people were in both movements, (b) women became aware of their own oppression while working for abolition, (c) male abolitionists were afraid that feminists would jeopardize the abolitionist cause, (d) all of the above.

Answer 5 of the following, 4 points each:

1. How are sex-role stereotypes transmitted to children? What are sexist textbooks?
2. Why did women begin to work in factories in the early 19th century? What caused a double standard in wages to be established? Why were many working women not willing to fight for better working conditions for themselves?
3. What sort of education did women receive in the early 19th century? Why did a movement to educate women begin?
4. How was the Muller vs. Oregon decision both a defeat and a victory for women? How does protective legislation sometimes hurt women? How could protective legislation be made more fair?
5. Why weren't women given birth control information? What often happened to people who gave out birth control information?
6. What was "woman's role" in the 1950's and early 1960's? What was the problem of the "feminine mystique?"

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